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of which were written for publication) have not been printed; some of them, because of the restrictions on the French press; but the greater part, because those to whom they were addressed were unwilling to expose the confidential testimonies of private friendship.

In closing, we are glad to announce that the American edition — we might almost say translation — of the “Democracy in America,” will shortly appear. Mr. Reeve’s version is, indeed, the basis for this issue; but it needed so many corrections and improvements as to have made Professor Bowen’s task hardly less arduous than a first-hand translation would have been. His fidelity and accuracy leave nothing to be desired. His notes, too, form an important and valuable feature of this edition, which bears, withal, in typography and mechanical execution, ample testimony to the liberal enterprise of the publisher.

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ART. VII. — *Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History.*

BY CHRISTIAN CHARLES JOSIAS BUNSEN, D. C. L. London. 1854. 2 vols.

THE philosophy which thinks of history in relation to *all* humanity is a modern conception. We propose to sketch some of the most prominent theories to which this conception has given birth. They can, we think, be reduced to three, — the Theistic, the Idealistic, and the Realistic.

The Theistic theory has for its special principle belief in a living, supreme, personal, perfect, one, infinite, eternal God, by whose power the universe exists, by whose providence its events are ordered or overruled. This is the idea which comes nearest to our religious nature, — the idea which, as the most spontaneous and the most lasting, enlivens our childhood and comforts our age. This was the idea which Bossuet had for his inspiration, when in lofty argument he reasoned on what is transient in its relation to what is immortal. He was one of the first to look comprehensively at the historic life of humanity; and he grandly expounds the Theistic system in

his immortal "Discourse on Universal History." Like many other immortal works, that of Bossuet was incidental. A simple priest, he was called from his provincial retirement to preach the Lent sermons for 1662 before Louis XIV. The preacher, then about thirty-four years old, was in the prime of his life and the prime of his power. He excited in the King the highest admiration. He was made preceptor to the Dauphin, and for the instruction of the Dauphin he wrote his magnificent "Discourse." The method is synthetic, and the spirit ecclesiastical. The essay consists of three parts. In the first part, the author resolves historic time into certain great divisions, marked by great events, as epochs. He begins with Adam, or the creation; goes on thence to Noah, or the deluge; thence to the calling of Abraham; thence to Moses, or the written law; thence to the capture of Troy; thence to Solomon, or the completion of the temple; thence to Romulus, or the foundation of Rome; thence to Cyrus, or the re-establishment of the Jews; thence to Scipio, or the conquest of Carthage; thence to the birth of Jesus Christ; thence to Constantine and the "Peace of the Church"; thence to Charlemagne, or the establishment of the new empire. These time-marks are twelve in number, and introduce the historic development of humanity into its course of modern expansion. With pregnant brevity and felicitous distinctness, the author, as he advances, brings out the leading points and personages in the course of ages, as they can be determined by records sacred and profane; and, though he abides by the accepted learning of his own day, he occasionally anticipates the results of later criticism. It is to be regretted that he did not carry out his idea, as he intended, into a review of Mohammedanism and of the French nationality.

The course of events, as narrated in the first part, is only a chronological guide to a view of the course of religion in the second. The author connects the course of religion with the course of events, and subordinates wide reading and research to the unity of his subject. Master of all the erudition known to the scholars of his age, he brought it fully to bear in the unfolding of his theme, with the comprehensive grasp of an imperial imagination, and with the grand expression of a com-

manding eloquence. His reasoning in defence of revelation is equally subtle and suggestive; and his reflections on the revolutions of empires, which constitute the third part of his "Discourse," are throughout marked by a deeply thoughtful philosophy. His section, particularly, on the growth and decay of the Roman power is full of import; and if Gibbon had not expressly stated that he conceived the design of writing "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" amidst the ruins of the Colosseum, one might suppose that he derived the hint of it from Bossuet. Bossuet's views of the Roman character and people evince profound historical sagacity. The Roman character and the Roman people were, as he conceives, essentially military; and the course of Roman history, as designated by changes in the spirit of the army, may be divided into three stages: the first, when the army was a power for the *state*; the second, when the army was a power for its *leaders*; the third, when the army was a power for *itself*, and at its pleasure or caprice made or unmade Emperors. The author, with characteristic succinctness, thus traces the history of the Roman army. The period when it contended with equals. This period lasted a little more than five hundred years, closing with the ruin of the Gauls in Italy, and with the empire of the Carthaginians. This was a period of frequent peril. The next period involved no peril; and however mighty the wars, victory was always sure. This period ended in the establishment of the Cæsars, and had continued for two hundred years. The third period was that in which the army steadily maintained its own courage and the glory of the Empire, and which, after four centuries, closed with the reign of Theodosius the Great. The last period is that in which the army met on all sides disaster and defeat, and when the Empire fell to pieces. This period also extended through four centuries. It began with the children of Theodosius, and terminated in the dominancy of Charlemagne. We find one essential error in the closing portion of Bossuet's remarks on the decline of the Roman power. He writes as if the disorders in the state and the disloyalty in the army were really *Roman*. He gives no due importance to the fact that, even before the close of the Republic, neither citizens nor soldiers

were of the *old* genuine Roman race. The *native* Roman people had ceased to exist, or had been swallowed up in deluges of foreigners. This may have been the result of the original lust of conquest which was inherent in the Roman character ; but long before the decline of the Empire, all that was *Roman* in breed and blood had become extinct. The Roman spirit survived, amidst the wrecks of Roman institutions, only in Roman law, and in *that* it is immortal.

The whole "Discourse" is pervaded by a grave and reflective spirit ; it fully deserves the admiration with which it has always been regarded, and does not merit the scornful sneer with which Mr. Buckle alludes to it. The tone is lofty and well sustained. Often it rises to the sublime of melancholy, with the grandeur of sadness.

"Thus," he writes, "when you see pass in an instant before your eyes, I do not say kings and emperors, but the great empires which held the whole world in awe ; when you behold the Assyrians, the Medes, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, fall, so to speak, one upon the other, — the terrific crash causes you to feel that among men there is nothing solid, and that instability and agitation are the proper lot of human things."

One idea runs through the "Discourse," — is its life, its soul, its spiritual energy ; and that is, that true religion is everlasting and divine in its unity and its perpetuity, — true religion in the unbroken succession of faith as continued and preserved from age to age in the unity and perpetuity of an infallible Church. For the sake of this Church are all ages and all dispensations. That Church began with time, as time began with human transgression and Divine promise, and only with time will it end. It had its faith in promise under the old law, it has its faith in fulfilment under the new law ; and as under the old law it had its consecrated priesthood and sacred institutions, it has them equally under the new law, not in type and shadow, but in spirit and in essence. The "Discourse" seems at first extremely simple ; but when the reader advances, and perceives how glowingly the idea is unfolded, with what harmony it rules the subject, and how the whole scope of history has from it import and interpretation, the mind opens to the surpassing grandeur of the design, and

feels amazed at the majesty of intellect and genius exhibited in both the conception and the execution. Yet nothing is forced or carried out of nature.

“The same God,” says the author, “who has bound the universe together, and who, all-powerful in himself, has willed, for the purpose of order, that all the parts of the great whole should depend one on another,—this same God has also willed that the course of human affairs should have its succession and proportions. I would say that men and nations have had qualities accordant with the elevation to which they were destined; and that, leaving out certain exceptional events, in which God would have his own hand alone apparent, no great change comes to pass which has not had its causes in preceding ages. And as in all concerns there is that which prepares for them, that which determines their occurrence, and that which causes them to succeed, the true science of history is to observe the latent tendencies which have prepared great changes, and the important conjunctures which brought them into fact.”

The whole philosophy of Bossuet in relation to history may, we think, be thus concisely summed up:—God is in the universe by his power; God is with humanity by his providence; he is in the Church by his spirit, in the special relation of his eternal and invisible perfection, as the infinitely wise and true, as the source of all holy inspiration.

The “Discourse on Universal History” consists simply of narration and reflection. Vico was the first who carried into the philosophy of history the severity of abstract thought. Vico, the son of a bookseller, was born at Naples in 1668, and had his early education among the Jesuits. After a life of domestic retirement and devoted study, he died in 1744. As in the case of Swift, who died more than a year later, the closing period of his earthly existence was passed in a state of mental imbecility. His special attainments were in classical literature, in philology, and in jurisprudence; in all these he was profoundly learned. His great work, “The Principles of a New Science,” was first published in 1725, in Naples, and, though it afterward fell into obscurity, three editions of it were called for while the author lived.

This work has the same object with that of Bossuet,—to trace the *mind* of God in the historic life of man. But whereas

Bossuet seeks to do this in the order of events, Vico seeks to do it by means of science. Bossuet discerns the action of God's intelligence in the course and changes of time; Vico, in certain essential and universal principles. Bossuet's method, as we have said, is synthetic, and its spirit ecclesiastical; Vico's method is analytic, and its spirit scientific. Bossuet deals with facts in an onward succession, and looks forward to their issue; Vico deals with facts as to their inward import, and looks backward to their origin. Bossuet assumes or accepts what Vico attempts to explain and demonstrate. Bossuet uses a more expansive course of reading, considered as to space and time; Vico's reading, though in these respects more limited than Bossuet's, is yet deeper, more multifarious, more recondite, more subtle, more speculative, and gives more incentives to inquiry. Bossuet's idea completes itself in a Catholic Church; Vico's, in a common humanity. No connected exposition of Vico is, of course, here expected, and we pretend to offer only a few detached suggestions. A people, according to Vico, has three stages in its course, and this course has the necessity and the uniformity of law. The first stage is the Divine, or the rule of the gods; the second is the Heroic, or the rule of the heroes; the third is the Human, or the rule of men. The first is theocracy, wherein the priest dominates; the second, aristocracy, wherein the noble holds power; the third begins with democracy and closes in monarchy.

There is law in the material world; there is law also in the spiritual world; in each sphere the law is divine. This divine law is equally opposed to the Fate of the Stoics and to the Chance of the Epicureans; and the aim of "The New Science" is to demonstrate such divine law. The humanizing element is religion. All peoples have ascribed the attribute of Providence to Divinity. The ancients sought to know the mind of Providence; the Hebrews spiritually in the Prophets, the Heathens fantastically in their oracles and signs. The deluge was not local, but universal, and after such saturation it required two centuries to dry the earth. While this process continued, men became wilder and wilder. Exhalations from the earth produced awful thunderings and lightnings; and so

each Pagan nation had its Jupiter. Each also had its Hercules,—a subduer of this savage earth, which is figured in the Nemean lion. Corn was the first gold of the world, and the time of its early culture was the golden age. Saturn, the god of seed, ruled it. Chronos came, and men began to mark the passage of time. The heavens were then not higher than the mountains, and the gods walked upon the earth. With Homer, the gods dwelt upon Olympus; but when astronomy had enlarged the heavens, Olympus was exalted above the stars. Poetry is the earliest wisdom; and the Homeric is the earliest poetry. By poetry alone the ante-historic life of nations is preserved. By this the old Pagan nations were cultivated, and this gives profound importance to myths and to philosophy.

The children of Noah sank into utter brutality. Striking indications of God, or divine power in the world, aroused many of them to a sense of reverence. Those who were so affected made for themselves dwellings in caves, each being the husband of one wife. Such were the founders of families and of the family institution. Thus the family is founded in religion, and laws originate with the family. This institution becomes associated with the cultivation of the soil. Here the first altar is raised; thus the altar is connected with the hearth; and both are united with the plough. In time such families constitute strong and orderly communities. Other classes of men continue rude; but at last seek, in the more settled districts, refuge either from want or from oppression. They occupy a subordinate or servile position. Thence come cities, with their dominion and decrees; thence come likewise peace and war, with all that they imply. Civil order follows the relation of the body to the soul; those who use the soul command; those who use the body serve. According to this doctrine, the latter must be the many, the former must be the few. Hence it arises, that the ruling class are led to suppose that they are of a *different nature* from the subject class, and even of a higher nature. But the subject class at length becomes too numerous for contented servitude; and then begin internal strifes, external emigrations, diffusion of



races, and diversity of languages. Thence were developed forms of government, and the laws of peace and war.

In like order, the modes of legislation followed the successive stages of development. First it was mystic theology. The sages of it were theological poets, and their wisdom was wrapped up in myths. Secondly, it was heroic jurisprudence, which consisted in bald rules, strictly literal. This was of use. Men were yet incapable of understanding principles and the universal, and for such principles it served to prepare them. The law was sacred ; the nobles obeyed it with unquestioning devotion, and spared no sacrifice to maintain its supremacy ; but as none but the nobles were its enactors, it was the will of the nobles alone that it contained. Often in this stage the citizen-noble displayed austere grandeur of character, but along with his heroism was to be found monstrous arrogance, avarice, and cruelty, as may be seen in the conduct of the early Roman Patricians. Yet this period has been celebrated by historians as that of the purest Roman patriotism, and of the boldest Roman independence. It would seem, the author suggests, as if these shining public virtues were intended by Providence for the preservation of early states against the ruinous influence of dark private vices ; for in such times men are so universally exclusive that they cannot even conceive of a common weal. The last method of jurisprudence is that of social rights, founded upon a common humanity, and expressed in equal laws. The idea of force then gives place to the idea of justice.

Frederic Schlegel is another eminent name in this division of our subject, and "The Philosophy of History" is but one of the many departments of elevated literature in which he has attained a permanent celebrity. His course of lectures was first delivered in Vienna, in 1828, when the author was about fifty-six years of age. He had already distinguished himself as a scholar in the classical, the Oriental, and the modern languages, and as a profound critic of all their greatest national and imaginative writings. Thus prepared, he came to discourse on the spirit of universal history. When spoken, the lectures excited admiration in one of the most brilliant audiences of Europe ; and when printed, became at once the

property of cultivated Christendom. We know not how we can better define the method of Schlegel's book, than by the term *exhaustive*. The writer seems to have drawn its materials from all sources of historic knowledge. The spirit of it is, as to faith, dogmatic; as to feeling, æsthetic; with a special enthusiasm for the arts and letters, the life and institutions, which prevailed in Western Europe during the Middle Age, particularly during that portion of it which genius and greatness have made for all time memorable. Because of the influence which the spirit of this period had on Schlegel, he is by critics reckoned among writers of the romantic school, — that is, writers whose culture in its inspiration is Gothic rather than Grecian, Christian rather than classic. Schlegel, when thirty-three years of age, became a Roman Catholic.

In faith and zeal he was as earnest a religionist as even Bossuet, but difference of character and circumstances would naturally produce a corresponding difference in their respective treatment of the same subject. Bossuet scarcely touches modern history, and contemplates antiquity only within the limits of classics and the Scriptures; but Schlegel does in truth discourse on *Universal History*. Bossuet intended to carry out the idea of his book, and to take a survey of later times; but had he done so, he could not, with all his magnificence of talent, have attained the comprehensiveness of Schlegel. In the first place, Schlegel lived in an age distinguished for historical inquiry and historical discoveries; in the second place, he was a German, and even among laborious and learned Germans he was noticeable for his labors and his learning. He accordingly contemplates the field of history over entire humanity, with the aid of vast knowledge in literatures and languages. In Oriental research and speculation particularly, he is a great explorer; he not only traversed all the spaces of human story previously known to Western scholarship, but in China and India he opened new and wide domains for historic thought. His lectures on India, China, and the East generally, are of great value, both for speculative thought and for historical generalization; they are so independently of his own special object, or of any special theory.

On Schlegel's theory we can say but few words; — exposi-

tion or criticism of it will not within our limits be possible. If we consider the "Philosophy of History" in relation to man's origin and destiny, we can conceive only of two theories;—one, that of human development; the other, that of human degeneracy. On the theory of development, there is a constant and onward tendency toward human perfection, prevented, however, from reaching its last result in absolute excellence by man's lower propensities and wants. On the theory of human degeneracy, there is a constant and onward tendency toward human corruption, prevented by Divine interference from reaching its last result in absolute destruction. This latter is the theory which Schlegel maintains, with exhaustless opulence of erudition and rhetoric. Man, when created, was innocent and holy, but in original sin lost his original goodness. He was still, however, far from his worst estate. Primitive and divine truth shed some of its pure light into the human mind, and especially among the descendants of Seth. The nearer man was to the source of this truth, the more distinct and clear were his perceptions of it; this primitive revelation was sacredly preserved in the traditions of the holy Patriarchs,—it was corrupted and distorted in the idolatries of the Heathen world: yet, though corrupted and distorted, it was the hidden spark of truth that still burned amidst the anarchy and darkness of Pagan superstitions. Pagan nations, as they receded from their primitive condition, sank into grosser and grosser debasement, and the race was preserved from utter moral and material ruin only by God's miraculous dispensations, perfected in Christianity, which is itself to be perfected in the universal blessedness of mankind.

"The most important subject," Schlegel writes, "and the first problem of philosophy, is the restoration in man of the lost image of God, so far as this relates to science. Should this restoration in the internal consciousness be fully understood, and really brought about, the object of pure philosophy is attained. To point out historically, in reference to the whole human race, and in the outward conduct and experience of life, the progress of this restoration in the various periods of the world, constitutes the object of the 'Philosophy of History.' In this way we shall clearly see how, in the first ages of the world, the original word of

Divine revelation formed the firm and central point of faith for the future reunion of the dispersed race of man ; how later, amid the various power, intellectual as well as political, which, in the middle period of the world, all ruling nations exerted on their times according to the measure allotted to them, it was alone the power of eternal love in the Christian religion which truly emancipated and redeemed mankind ; and how, lastly, the pure light of this divine truth, universally diffused through the world, and through all science,—the term of all Christian hope, and divine promise, whose fulfilment is reserved for the last period of consummation,—crowns, in conclusion, this restoration.”

Among those who have, within the Theistic system, philosophized on history, we must not omit to mention Herder. He was a native of East Prussia, and the son of a poor school master. He was born in 1744. In the family of a clergyman, who taught him with his own sons, he obtained the rudiments of classical learning. He afterward devoted himself to theology. He was elected to the Divinity Professorship in the University of Göttingen, but the King of England, who was also Elector of Hanover, refused to confirm the appointment, and his veto made it void. Herder was then chosen Preacher to the Court of Weimar, where he enjoyed the companionship of the Goethe circle, and passed the remainder of his life. He was at once poetic and scholastic. Poetic feeling lived in the spirit of his works, but the scholastic tendency prevailed in their form. He was eloquent as a preacher ; and not only of his sermons, but of all his writings, eloquence is a characteristic. He was widely learned, and his writings are very numerous. Theology, philosophy, imaginative literature, criticism, history, all had contributions from his genius ; but it is as the author of “*Ideas upon the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*” that he comes under our notice in this essay. Schlosser, in reviewing the literature of the eighteenth century, expresses no very exalted opinion of this work ; indeed, he rather leaves an impression on the mind of the reader, that it is more pretentious than profound. He thinks meanly of Herder as a metaphysician, as a theologian, but most meanly of all in his speculations upon science. “*Trusting,*” he says, “to inspiration in the real and exact sciences, Herder, without having any pretensions to be an investigator of nature, or

even to be well acquainted with her works, attempts to establish a progression or gradation of creatures,—an attempt which would presuppose an amazing knowledge of the departments of the natural kingdom, if every one who was desirous of treating the subject prosaically should undertake the task.” In spite of this unfavorable decision, the work is a noble one. It is indeed discursive and diffuse; but it glows throughout with the spirit of beauty, and with the soul of Christian humanity.

Coming now to speak of the Idealistic theory in the Philosophy of History, we feel how unsatisfactory must be what we have to offer. One remark it is necessary to begin with: the idealists treat of history metaphysically. Each has his theory of being;—the theory is in itself complete and one; it comprehends all that is actual or possible; it accounts for all that is actual or possible. The idealist does not, therefore, separate history from his general theory; it is included *in* his theory, as a recorded portion of phenomenal humanity. The psychologist deals with the laws of mind, as they are evolved from individual consciousness; but the idealist deals with “THE ABSOLUTE.” The idealist regards the mere psychologist much in the same way in which Michael Angelo, when architect of St. Peter’s, would probably have regarded a carrier of hods or a maker of mortar,—as a useful, but extremely subordinate menial. Yet, vain and fantastic as the idealists may seem to our practical and prosaic temperament, the man who disdains them scorns some of the greatest minds which our species can boast, and the man who refuses to study them, even on history, will often lose the advantage of profound suggestion, and the joy of noble eloquence. Pardon us, however, if, in this division of our paper, our language may not be entirely in the idiom of our mother English. We must, in some degree, speak the dialect of our topic; and, as its most marked representatives, we refer to Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Each of these connected his view of history with his philosophy; but to explain the philosophy of these wonderful thinkers would here be a vain attempt; and only with the utmost condensation can we state their views of history.

A few words, however imperfectly said, must be premised

on their respective metaphysical theories. All these theories progressively arose out of the teaching of Emanuel Kant. We can refer to this teaching only in its elementary idea. In the simplest fact of consciousness, the individual is conscious of himself and of something which is *not* himself; or, in the German formula, the fact includes the ME and the NOT-ME. The real existence of the ME is given in the fact as a necessary certainty; but, though Kant attributes a complete philosophic value to the NOT-ME, he does not decide that it has any independent actual existence; in other words, he does not assume as indubitable the existence of an outward universe. His dualism is therefore merely formal; for only one term of it—the ME—has any positive validity. Fichte saw this; he laid hold on the ME, and made it the basis of all his wide-reaching and astonishing speculations. Schelling considered this basis as too narrow, and as only the smallest point short of Nihilism. He therefore merged both the ME and the NOT-ME into the totality of all being, or the Absolute. Hegel transcends the transcendentalism of his predecessors, and explains thought and being by the relation of extremes.

“Every thing or notion, says Hegel, has existence to the mind, because it has, or it seems to have, a *contradictory*; in other words, there is some other thing or notion standing outright against it, and by opposition marking it off or *defining* it. A notion and its opposite, or *contradictory*, are two elements essential to every act of thinking; and as soon as these are realized, a third act or movement supervenes, namely, the effort to *reconcile the two contradictories*, and to find some third, and of course higher notion, in which they unite or blend. Three elements, therefore,—a notion, its contradictory, and the solution of the contradiction,—a *thesis*, an *antithesis*, and the synthesis of the two,—represent a complete act of logic, or one movement of dialectic; and on the type of this movement Hegel undertook to explain the entire course and action of thought in its efforts to comprehend the universe. . . . . Thought is presented to the astonished reader, rising up from its barest expression through a gigantic scheme of ascending *triplets*, until, having comprehended every form and sphere of possible knowledge, it reaches the Infinite.”

We must accept this exposition, if not for its clearness, at least for its brevity. The views which these philosophers hold of the individual and of existence correspond with these

respective theories. With Fichte, the individual is a free, self-sufficing power; with Schelling, he is dependent and phenomenal; with Hegel, he is thought realized in consciousness. Existence with Fichte is the manifestation of the Ego; with Schelling it is the manifestation of the Absolute; and with Hegel it is knowledge, or rather it is a sort of concrete and progressive logic. Fichte lays most stress on the will, and is therefore earnest and ethical; Schelling on imagination, and on feeling,—he is, therefore, poetic, mystical, and pantheistic; Hegel has his greatest force in the intellect, is dialectical, and finds all being and all truth in the evolution of syllogisms. Each of these thinkers is an idealist; Fichte a subjective idealist, Schelling an objective idealist, and Hegel an absolute idealist. Each has his philosophy of history, in the spirit of his theory.

Fichte gives us the application of his philosophy to history in his Lectures on “The Characteristics of the Present Age.” He presents the essence of his doctrine in his opening lecture on “The Idea of a Universal History,” and applies it through the remaining sixteen to the tendencies of the age as he found it. He intends his method to be strictly *a priori*. “The philosopher,” he says, “must deduce from the unity of his presupposed principle all the possible phenomena of experience.” The philosopher as such must be able *a priori* to describe time as a whole, and all its possible epochs. Every particular epoch of time contains the idea of a particular age, and the ideas and epochs which precede contain those which follow. This position is expressed, in a subsequent lecture, with great fulness and eloquence.

“Worlds produce worlds. Ages produce new ages, which stand in meditation over those which have gone before, and reveal the secret bond of connection which unites within them causes and consequences. Then the grave opens,—not that which men heap together in the earth, but the grave of impenetrable darkness, wherewith the first life has surrounded us,—and from out of it arises the mighty power of ideas, which sees, in the new light, the end in the beginning, the perfect in the partial; every wonderful work which springs from faith in the Eternal appears, and secret aspirations, which are here imprisoned and bound down to earth, soar upwards on unfettered pinions into new and brighter ether.”

To understand this progress the philosopher must have a world-plan, from which may be deduced all the great epochs of human life on earth. The world-plan is the fundamental idea of human life on earth; the epochs are the fundamental ideas of particular ages, from which all their phenomena are to be deduced. "The life of mankind on this earth," the author observes, "stands here in place of the *one universal life*, and earthly time in place of universal time." "The end of the life of mankind on earth," he says, "is this,—that in this life they may order all their relations with freedom according to reason." This life of humanity has, accordingly, within earthly time, two general conditions;—the first, that in which it has not yet attained to freedom according to reason; the second, that in which voluntary and reasonable freedom has been reached, and is carried onward. Humanity has, according to Fichte, five principal epochs. First, the unlimited dominion of reason as instinct,—*the state of innocence*. Second, the epoch in which reason as instinct is changed into external ruling authority: the age of positive systems which demand blind faith and unconditional obedience,—*the state of progressive sin*. Third, the epoch of liberation,—directly from the external ruling authority, indirectly from the power of reason as instinct, and generally from reason in any form,—*the state of completed sinfulness*. This is the age the characteristics of which Fichte undertakes in his Lectures to describe and to define; the one in which, he maintained, men were then living. "Fourth, the epoch of reason and science: the age in which truth is looked upon as the *highest*, and loved before all other things,—*the state of progressive justification*." Fifth, the epoch of reason as art: the age in which humanity with sure and unerring hand builds itself up into a fitting image and representative of reason,—"*the state of completed justification and sanctification*."

Baseless as these data may seem, and imaginary these divisions, yet in the course of the argument based on them Fichte shows himself not only a master of the grandest eloquence, but a man of the noblest convictions. Abstract as his thinking may appear, he weds it to resistless passion, but to a passion that scorns all selfishness, all sensualism, and is fiery



with spiritual zeal for truth and duty ; and this united mightiness of passion and of thinking was poured forth in torrents of impetuous and heroic oratory. Nor was this merely philosophic or scholastic. In his "Addresses to the German Nation in the War of Independence," it went forth in words of flame, making the coldest hearts hot with the love of liberty and the hatred of bondage. NATIONALITY became the consciousness of every man who had any consciousness of manhood ; thinkers became soldiers, and Fichte panted to be in the field ; but wisely he was not allowed to waste himself in camp or battle, since every word of his was worth a sword. In action, as in teaching, uncompromising right was the spirit and the substance of his life ; and of virtue, in all its demands of sacrifice, and all its worth, he was not only a splendid preacher, but a practical example. Abstruse and remote as were the principles of his metaphysics, he was yet no cold anatomist of speculation, but a living, sympathetic man ; and though his philosophical system must be designated as "ego-tistic idealism," no man had warmer interest in the cause of humanity, in even its simplest and humblest realities. Its faith, its hopes, its struggles, its sufferings, its triumphs, and its joys came all near to him, and because the thoughts of his heart were generous, the words of his mouth were powerful. He did not withdraw his sympathy from the common life ; but neither was he unmindful of his own peculiar order, and some of the most magnificent passages in his Lectures are those in which he dwells on the labors, the trials, the obligations, the dignities, and the pleasures which are in a life of scholarship and thought. We close these remarks on him with an illustrative quotation.

"Who are they who have discovered and extended sciences? Have they accomplished this without labor and sacrifice? What has been their reward? While the age in which they lived spent its days in gay enjoyment, they sat lost in solitary thought, in order that they might discover a law or a relation which had called forth their admiration, and with respect to which they had absolutely no other desire than simply to discover it, — sacrificing pleasure and fortune, neglecting their outward concerns, and lavishing their finest genius in these researches, — laughed at by the multitude as fools and dreamers. *Now*

their discoveries have proved of manifold advantage to human life. . . . . But have they themselves partaken of these fruits of their labors? Have they foreseen or even conjectured these results? Have they not, rather, when their spiritual aspirations have been interrupted by such views of their occupation, when entertained by others, uttered truly sublime lamentations over the desecration of the holy to the profane uses of life, it being concealed from them that life itself must in like manner be thereby sanctified? Only when, through their labors, they had been made so comprehensible, and a knowledge of them been so widely diffused as to be carried out in practice by less inspired minds, — only then have these discoveries been applied to the wants of life, and so become the means of arming the human race with superior power over the forces of nature. If thus no vision, not even a presentiment of the usefulness of their discoveries, could indemnify them for their sacrifices, what was their reward? And what at the present day is the reward of those — if at the present day there are such — who, with the same devotion, the same sacrifices, and with the same disinterested zeal, amidst the scorn and mockery of the vulgar, raise their eyes toward the ever-flowing fountain of truth? This it is: they have entered into a new life-element of spiritual clearness and purity, whereby life in any form becomes absolutely distasteful to them. A higher world, which is first and most intimately made known to us by the light which is native within it, has arisen upon them; this light has filled their eyes with its beneficent and inspiring radiance, so that they can henceforth and forever direct their view to nothing else than that illuminated height shining in deep and surrounding darkness. This heavenly vision so rivets their gaze upon it, that their whole being is enchained, and in it every other sense is silently absorbed. They need no recompense; they have made an incalculable gain."

In showing the relation which Schelling bears to history, we use the words of Schwegeler: —

"History as a whole is, according to him, a gradual and self-disclosing revelation of the Absolute, a progressing demonstration of the existence of a God. The history of this revelation may be divided into three periods. The first is that in which the overruling power was apprehended only as destiny; that is, as a blind power, cold and consciousnessless, which brings the greatest and most glorious things of earth to ruin; it is marked by the decay of the magnificence and wonders of the ancient world, and the fall of the noblest manhood that ever bloomed. The second period of history is that in which this destiny manifests itself as nature, and the hidden law seems changed into a manifest law

of nature, which compels freedom and every choice to submit to and serve a plan of nature. This period seems to begin with the spread of the great Roman Republic. The third period will be that wherein what has previously been regarded as Destiny and Nature will develop itself as Providence."

In speaking of Hegel, and the application of his philosophy to history, two circumstances deserve attention. One is the logical consistency and force with which he carries his law of contradiction into all his explanations of historical phenomena. Every human condition and change is evolved out of the conflict of opposite principles. The other circumstance is, that, notwithstanding the apparent abstruseness and barrenness of this formula, starting originally, as it does, from the astounding unrealism that pure being and nothing are identical, it would be hard to find an intellectual work of more pregnant suggestiveness, or of eloquence more vital and masculine, than Hegel's on the Philosophy of History. Its comprehensive grasp of knowledge, its uncommon vigor and compression, its rich and concrete style, its sagacious insight, and its clear estimate of actual existence, are qualities strikingly manifested in the work, however little to be expected from its theory.

Thought, according to Hegel, is the activity which unfolds itself in the life of the world. Humanity is little at first but an unconscious animalism. Thus we see it in the savage condition. Africa has hardly raised itself above this condition, but has remained in inward and outward slavery. It is as the spiritual elements of life take form in organic order, that human existence attains a determinate reality. But if this organic order becomes fixed and rigid, it destroys inward liberty, and renders progress impossible. On the other hand, if the spiritual elements of life have no definite external organism, life becomes dreamy, mystical, and inactive. The first is the life of China, the second is that of India. Advancement belongs to neither; for that can result only when the outward and the inward act and react livingly on each other, and so issue in new and successive changes. Subjective freedom belongs to the individual, objective freedom to the state; when these two harmonize, there is true and complete freedom. The objective is found in China, the subjective

in India. The Chinese state presents only the externalism of the most prosaic understanding, and its literature is all history. In contrast with this, the internalism of humanity in India has given over the Hindoo mind to fantasy and sensibility, and its literature is all poetry; but Hindoo character is devoid of purity and morality. Two great systems of religious ideas originated with the Hindoo mind, — Brahminism and Buddhism. Brahminism turned monstrous dreams of the imagination into fixed superstitions, founded on these superstitions the most dreadful spiritual tyranny, made them perpetual in cruel social distinctions, and connected them with religious observances which were both terrible and licentious. Buddhism was at once a modification of Brahminism and a reaction against it. According to Brahminism, the divine element was incarnate only in special and miraculous personages, and at rare intervals; according to Buddhism, it was immanent in all humanity, and perpetual. This idea necessarily subverted the claims of caste; it annihilated among men all essential distinctions of nature; it involved the doctrine of equality and brotherhood; it authenticated the sacredness and worth of the gentle and charitable virtues. The transcendental aim to which the soul is directed as the highest consummation of existence is alike in both systems, — absorption into the Infinite, — and this, so far as ordinary speech can express it, seems to mean absorption into nothingness.

Egypt had never been so utterly stationary as China and India have remained; and these have so remained, in a great measure, because of their isolation. Still, the spirit in Egypt was immersed in matter and in forms, in colossal structures and images, in rituals and priesthoods. From this subjection the spirit in Egypt was never able to emancipate itself. Other influences were, in this respect, needful to help humanity. One of these was the Phœnician mind, with its tendencies to commerce and its invention of an alphabet. But this, also, was not sufficient. The divine element in life needed to be unfolded. This was done only by the Hebrew religion. In all the western countries of the Oriental world religions were but different forms of nature-worship, more or less pure or gross, according as the spirit tended toward the

purser or grosser elements of nature. So the symbols and observances are more or less pure or gross, according to the phases or modes of nature which they typify and consecrate. Among the Jews alone did the spirit absolutely transcend nature. But man was in bondage to the spirit. While the Hebrews had the sense of divine inspiration, and the conception of God in that of a spiritual unity, the free development of cultivated humanity was first realized among the Greeks. Among them first began to breathe the spirit of human liberty. This was equally the spirit of their mythology and of their politics. Naturalism, by the force of spiritual individuality, was broken up in the mythology of the Greeks, and took the diversity of human character and of human inspiration. The Greek religion, as derived objectively from observation of nature, and subjectively from action of mind, had an æsthetic side and an introspective side. It had accordingly a symbolic outwardness and a philosophic inwardness. In its outwardness it included idolatry and art; in its inwardness it implied materialism and pantheism; and it gave birth alike to mysticism and to science. The Greeks gloried in freedom; but their idea of duty was merely political. They had no subjective morality; they had not, in *our* sense, a conscience. Their morality was not of conscience, but of custom. Devotion to their country or state was their highest life; and when it ceased to be so, their institutions went to ruin. When individual opinion entered into society, when the state was subjected to criticisms, and when every one had a view of his own, great men failed of the public confidence; and so failing, they lost their influence and power. On the whole, then, this civilization was mainly æsthetic,—that is, the effort to carry the ideal of the human into the actual of the human.

But this poetic concrete life had to give way to a deeper and more thoughtful life. The Greeks bodied forth life into beauty, the Romans organized it into law. The Romans had their origin in the outcasts of various tribes; they founded their state, and even their homes, in force. The spirit of their origin ran through the whole course of their history. Their internal struggles and external wars led humanity at the same time to a sense of personality and to a sense of right.

Christianity came in order to give completeness to the individual, and to carry on the race toward universality and perfection, — that is, to make actual the idea of universal truth, right, and liberty. But Christianity became itself a sort of institutional materialism. Then arose against it the simple and abstract theology of Mohammed. Out of this contradiction and antagonism issued the Crusades; from these, discontent and doubt; then, mental excitement and bold adventure; afterward, the Protestant Reformation; finally, modern philosophy and the French Revolution. Hegel's disquisition on Christianity, if regarded from his point of view, is able. The Church, with Hegel, is an issue from progressive time; with Bossuet, it begins with time, for it begins with man. Hegel explains the Church by time; Bossuet explains time by the Church. Hegel is brief, pregnant, and eloquent on the Middle Age; while on the German spirit — to which the last portion of his book is devoted — he enlarges with overflowing energy and zeal. The leading ideas which he endeavors to establish and illustrate by the whole work are these: "The Oriental world knows only that ONE is free; the Greeks and Romans recognize SOME as free; the German nations, under the influence of Christianity, have attained to the knowledge that ALL are free." In the universal realization of this knowledge the author sees the consummation of human history, — asserting as he closes, that "what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God,' but is essentially his work."

It must have been observed that, in this sketch, most of the writers we have mentioned belong to Germany. There are yet other Germans of whom, if space did not fail, we would wish to speak, especially of Lessing and of his thoughts on "The Education of the Human Race." We have not hunted laboriously after these writers, they came easily to memory, — and the more easily, since the Germans are almost alone in the domain of abstract generalization. The German mind has been the *thinking* mind of the modern world. It has been peculiarly the mind of spiritual ideas, and it did not wait for Kant before taking on its supersensual tendency. Kant did not make that tendency; that tendency made him. But, some may say, it was better to create facts for actual history, than

to dream about ideal history. Then, it may be said in reply, that the Germans *have*, in the modern world, created the greatest facts of its actual history; and among its greatest facts are these very ideal dreams and dreamers. The dreams — if dreams they be — are the visions of wondrous brains, and the dreamers themselves are Titans of the human intellect. They have had one nobly useful influence: they have silenced forever all puny talkers upon thought; they have shown that no one has authority to speculate on the possible, until he has mastered the actual; and, transcendentalists though they were, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, had traversed all the regions of positive human knowledge. Such minds exemplify the vast capacities of man, they elevate the standard of average attainment, and, by the aspiration which they stimulate, they expose to scorn the mediocrity of the self-contented and the self-conceited. It is very extraordinary to call the German mind a mind of only dreams and speculations, when from *that* mind we have had the grandest of our practical discoveries, and the most ennobling of our social institutions and inspirations.

Lastly, there is the Realistic theory in the Philosophy of History. We distinguish this system from the Theistic, because it does not attempt to trace the order of Providence in human affairs, but only to trace the order of facts in their relations, influences, and results. We distinguish it from the Idealistic, because it does not, like that, pretend to have a principle of absolute science, from which it can by necessary inference deduce the sequence of events, or to demonstrate that events could not possibly be but as they are; it presumes to no loftier sphere of evidence than that of observation and experience. One or other of three aspects of humanity may prevail in the application of the Realistic system to history, — the Political, the Social, the Physical; and as respectively illustrative of each, we mention Montesquieu, Guizot, and Buckle.

Montesquieu was one of the writers who prepared the way for the French Revolution. It is a curious circumstance, that most of these writers were aristocratic, — some of them by birth, all of them by taste, character, and culture. They were

in their day the leaders of literature ; in every form of it they used to insinuate revolutionary ideas, but particularly in satire and philosophy. To this end they endeavored to make satire amusing and philosophy agreeable ; and as they brought to their task wit, learning, eloquence, and every charm of brilliant style, they were successful, and Montesquieu was one of the most successful. In his "Persian Letters," under the guise of an interesting fiction, he conceals the most unsparing ridicule of French society and of French institutions, religious and political. His "Considerations upon Roman History" was ostensibly designed to point out the evils which proved fatal to the Roman state ; but virtually it was a grave and covert attack on the despotism of the French monarchy. But his most important work is "The Spirit of Laws." In this he undertakes to explain the origin and formation of states, the sources and reasons of their laws, and the nature of their ruling principles. The ruling principle in a republic, he maintains, is virtue ; in a constitutional monarchy, honor ; in a despotism, fear. His reading was wide and various, but it was desultory, and if he did not trust entirely to imagination for his facts, he is accused of trusting a good deal to it in the application of them. Critics say now of him, that he first made his theory, and then looked about for proofs. Yet Montesquieu stood high with the highest minds of his day ; D'Alembert almost exhausts the resources of eulogy in praising him ; but, in our time, Macaulay as strenuously taxes those of disparagement in *dispraising* him. He was, says this critic, "specious, but shallow, — studious of effect, and indifferent to truth, — eager to build a system, but careless of collecting those materials out of which alone a sound and durable system can be built ; he constructed theories as rapidly and as slightly as card-houses, — no sooner projected than completed, no sooner completed than blown away, no sooner blown away than forgotten." Notwithstanding these scornful strictures, the writings of Montesquieu are still useful, both for study and for amusement.

We need merely name the venerable Guizot. We are all familiar with his fame and with his virtue. We have no occasion to enlarge on his massive learning, his extensive and ex-



act research, his scholarly calmness and moderation, his tolerance and humanity of spirit, his grave and noble eloquence, — all this is known by his numerous writings, but particularly by his “Discourses on the History of Civilization in Modern Europe,” which have been read as widely as the most popular novel, and which brought into such clear and open light for us all the successive social and spiritual phenomena of Western Christendom, with the agencies which they manifest and the tendencies which they indicate. Civilization, according to Guizot, does not consist in mere intellectual attainment, nor in mere physical well-being, nor even in social order added to both of these; but in all combined in a certain onward vitality, of which the result is the progress of society and the progress of the individual, each being reciprocally influential on the other. But this progress is here always limited, imperfect, and cannot be satisfactorily explained within the bounds of earth and time. Even within these bounds, the data for generalization are still few. Civilization, as he considers, “is still in its infancy.” “How distant,” he says, “is the human mind from the perfection to which it may attain, from the perfection for which it was created! How incapable are we of grasping the whole destiny of man! Let any one even descend into his own mind; let him picture there the highest point of perfection to which he can conceive, to which he can hope, that man, that society, may attain; let him contrast this picture with the present state of the world; — and he will feel assured that society and civilization are still in their childhood; that, however great the distance they have advanced, *that* which they have before them is incomparably, is infinitely greater.” Guizot treats his subject with as much force as knowledge, with as much caution as completeness. Balmes — a Spanish priest, earnestly eloquent, and largely learned — controverts, in a very able work, Guizot’s ideas of European civilization; and those will read both writers who desire to know the philosophy of European civilization from the Romish point of view as well as from the Protestant.

The Political aspect of humanity prevails in the historical philosophy of Montesquieu, the Social aspect in that of Guizot; and now we come to that of Buckle, in which the Physical aspect prevails. Mr. Buckle intended, at first, to

write a history of civilization, which he was to illustrate from universal history. He decided, however, to write only the "History of Civilization in England." His principles are, in brief, — 1. Human history is governed by certain necessary laws. 2. One of these laws is, that man modifies nature, and that nature modifies man. 3. When nature overpowers man, it deadens his faculties, and impedes progress, or renders it impossible, while, when man overpowers nature, stimulus is gained for culture and advancement. The result of this struggle between man and nature determines the destiny of nations. 4. Another law is, that human actions accord with this result. 5. Statistics prove the regularity of human actions. 6. The historian must ascertain, in all given circumstances, whether mind, or nature, most influences human actions; therefore the knowledge of physical science is essential to the writing of history. 7. Man, as to his average condition, is mainly influenced by climate, food, soil, and the general aspect of nature. 8. The moral sentiments and passions are ever the same. The results of intellect alone accumulate into knowledge, and progress is the result of knowledge. In every direction the critics impeach Mr. Buckle's philosophy. They discredit his data by impeaching his statements of facts, or his use of them; they discredit his logic by impeaching it in its evidence, method, and conclusions. "What have statistics to do," a critic asks, "with the appearance of an Alexander the Great, a Mohammed, a Newton, or a Shakespeare?" The individual counts for little in the theory of Mr. Buckle; yet the critic objects that he attributes much power to ruling minds, such as those of Richelieu, of Descartes, of Louis XIV., and of George III. Mr. Buckle, critics allege, overlooks the profoundest movements of society and their agents in the ancient and modern world, while he not only misrepresents, but also misunderstands, both the men and institutions of the Middle Age. In answer to the credulity and ignorance attributed to the "Middle Age," one critic retorts: "A generation that has seen the extravagances of Mesmerism, of table-turning, and of spirit-rapping, with the still more revolting phenomena of Mormonism, might abstain from adopting an insolent tone toward its predecessors, and from forming an arrogant estimate of itself." Another critic

denies the value which Mr. Buckle attributes to the influence of intellect, and regards it as a fundamental error that he has not made more account of passion, moral sentiment, and faith. But, in spite of all these objections,—most of them sound and unanswerable,—Mr. Buckle has come into the field of history with a large and weighty influence on numerous classes of intelligent and thoughtful readers.

These several theories, diverse as they are, have one motive in common,—they all seek for a *law* in history. The Theists find that law in faith, the Idealists find it in thought, and the Realists find it in facts. But why should these be disconnected? The true philosophy of history embraces them all, harmonizes them all, and to all, as so united, gives a living soul. Such a philosophy must bring into accordant unity fact, thought, and faith. Such a philosophy must note events, must by thought trace their order and relation, and must by faith discern in all the intelligence of God's spirit, and the benign wisdom of God's providence. And let it not be considered that studying history in this large way is to no purpose. It is to the best purpose. It is one of the greatest mental utilities. We need not go over traditional truisms on the uses of history. History gives the data for all the science of humanity, and it contains the inspiration of all its greater poetry. This is sufficiently understood. But the advantage to be gained from the effort to conceive an idea of history as a whole is not so well understood. The conception of an idea of history has, for instance, an intellectual advantage. It accustoms the mind to expansive habits of reflection, and thereby trains it to an ample thoughtfulness. It accustoms it to ideas of great measures of duration, of space, and the mind is accordingly enlarged. It tends to train the mind to habits of order and arrangement. It enables the mind to bring all that it learns of humanity, whether by record or observation, into connection with a central principle. This result alone is one of vast utility. History, entirely, in its exactness of detail and in its completeness of comprehension, no human intellect could grasp; but when the mind has once a conception of history as a totality, it has a living organism with which it can vitally incorporate every fragment of knowledge it can gather of man's experience and destiny in time.